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THE OPPOSITION TO SPIRITUAL SCIENCE.

LIES OF MODERN LIFE AND DISGUISED FACTS.

Lecture by Dr. RUDOLF STEINER, delivered at St. Gallen, Switzerland
on the 26th of October, 1916.

CONCLUSION.

We know that we now live in an age of transition. By calling it an age of transition, we are not speaking superficially, but in another sense. For we are now living in those times of transition when the ancient atavistic clairvoyant instincts have died away, times in which we should learn to enter the spiritual worlds consciously. This is evident to the spiritual investigator. Yet these atavistic clairvoyant capacities possessed by human beings at that time brought them thoughts that could influence them, thoughts that were needed during their epoch of culture. History tells us but little of the thoughts which influenced human life in so lofty a way during the Chaldean, or the Egyptian epochs of culture. Though they might not pass muster in face of modern critical thought, they were nevertheless of value for their own time. Living, penetrative thoughts! In our present time, we must once more gain thoughts which can penetrate into realities and influence them! But this can only be done, if the spiritual world fructifies the present age, in the same way in which it fructified ancient times. Yet this fructifying influence of the spiritual world can no longer be experienced unconsciously. Human consciousness must therefore awaken, if spiritual knowledge is to be really grasped.

Even the above-mentioned theologian is not inspired by bad intentions, though we can prove that he is responsible for the most serious harm; in him we can see the most detrimental effects of the thoughtlessness of our time, and it can easily be proved that he causes untold harm, by infecting others with his lack of thought. Yet he is not inspired by evil intentions: on the contrary, we have before us a man of insight, a man endowed with the insight which people nowadays possess, if they do not progress in the direction of the real spiritual world, as I explained was the case even with

*) From stenographic notes unrevised by the lecturer.

Jaurès. Yet such a man as this, who gave lectures on religion, knows that humanity has now in a certain sense entered a blind alley, and that it is impossible to proceed with the aid of the thoughts, feelings and impulses transmitted by an ancient mentality, on the principles of an ancient world-conception. He also knows that this has led to the materialism of modern times, and that things must change! He is indeed rather extreme in his ideas, this theologian, for he says that the 19th century led men to concepts such as sport, comfort and mammon. He speaks of all the dark aspects of materialism, and is quite ready to admit that one must oppose sport, love of comfort and wealth, in the form in which they came up during the 19th century. Yet his words are mere phrases; otherwise he would not have said the following. For at the end of his first lecture - and when reading it, one can hardly believe one's eyes or one's cognitive powers! - we find the following sentences: - A famous, outstanding man of the present actually said these words! At first he says quite rightly: All the things that are now taking place, must be valued differently - "they must no longer constitute our final goal. The merchant must no longer see in the acquisition of money an end in itself; the enjoyment of life should no longer be the sole content of life; nor should there be people whose only care is their health."

You see, he is very radical. From the standpoint of spiritual science, we shall certainly not advance such radical things; for we prefer to leave men free. We know that when they begin to grasp Karma, reincarnation and the other truths transmitted by spiritual science, they will discover their own right path in life. But this theologian knows that men have landed in a blind alley; he says very radically (he would speak differently if he were to take up spiritual science) that people must no longer earn money, enjoy life, or care for their health. To mention one example of thousands: I once came across a sanatorium, which was kept by a celebrated man; it was a sanatorium for nervous diseases. Once I saw a whole number of patients going past, on their way to lunch. And it seemed to me that the most fidgety, most nervous person of all ... was the famous director of the nursing home! But our theologian is a radical person, for he says: The content of life must change: No one should be allowed to live only for the sake of his health, etc. And then he writes: -

"that is to say" - and this concludes his lecture! - "that is to say: People can go on doing what they have DONE so far, but they must THINK differently, while doing it."

That is HIS way of reforming life! Just think, the man of deep insight into what is really needed, advances the following life-reform: Everything must change; that is to say, nothing should take on a different aspect, but people should think differently concerning everything: -

"Such things should not represent the innermost, the goal, nor the highest value; they must be STRIVEN FOR, with

the same energy; they must be VALUED (that is to say, thought about) on a different scale from heretofore."

Well, nothing further need be added! It is necessary to observe such things, for they do not only appear INDIVIDUALLY, but may be found to-day in the whole civilised world. And what people experience in the course of their destiny, depends solely upon this defectiveness in thinking and feeling! We should first of all bear in mind this fact, and as spiritual investigators we should at least find it possible not to listen to that which blows and storms through the world to-day, nor to that which is recognised as the "highest values", out of other impulses. We should in this connection, rather look upon the essential facts, by not living in a cloud of all kinds of feelings which now prevail in the world, and under whose influence so many untruths arise, for these things exercise an influence. We live in such a sphere (I referred to this in Zurich) that while the man transmits such stuff, thought-beasts enter the hearts and souls of those who listen to him. We live in a sphere in which a man of this kind, after having published such things, can say:

"The contents of this little book consist of 12 lectures which I delivered last winter at ..." (I do not want to mention the name of the place) ..."before an audience of more than a thousand."

There are audiences of thousands (the places do not matter)! - This is a fact which we must bear in mind. It is essential that our souls should envisage the whole earnestness and deep significance of these observations.

When many truths have been gathered from the spiritual world, we must recognise what these truths really mean to us, and at the same time, we must recognise that in such truths we confront, as it were, the very opposite of the world-conception which now influences men, in a far greater measure than we think! For to-day we live far too thoughtlessly! This is what weighs so heavily upon the soul, to have to look upon the obtuseness (forgive me for having to use this word) which is so wide-spread to-day, upon mankind's obtuseness in the face of the forces which lead and influence the human course of development. The nuances of feeling for the kind of truths contained in spiritual science should also be acquired by contemplating the counter-image. Consequently, we have not only to search for all kinds of beautiful and fine-sounding words - setting forth ideals before men, and so forth - but it is essential to recognise above all what our best contemporaries are unable to recognise: That the spiritual world has now to be disclosed.

It would take me too long to explain this now, but there are good reasons why humanity struggled for so many centuries against a spiritual comprehension of Christianity. A gnosis existed during the first centuries of Christianity You all know, that our spiritual science does not dish up again the ancient gnosis; in the past, the gnosis first endeavoured to develop a spiritual science, but it was pushed into the background, for men were unwilling to view the

Christian truths in a spiritual light. This tendency has continued, and has also penetrated into natural-scientific strivings.

But it taught men something: That, for centuries, they opposed the possibility of grasping spiritual truths. The time has now arrived in which those who live entirely in our modern culture -- which is, after all, materialism, although people do not wish to admit this -- have the greatest difficulty in recognising a real spiritual world, and by this I do not only mean a hazy way of talking about the spiritual world, but an objective recognition of the spiritual world. We must realise that the recognition of the spiritual world is absolutely essential; everything else will follow; everything in the form of a newly-founded ethical, social or even practical order of life must follow, when the foundations have been established through the recognition of real spiritual facts and spiritual beings.

It was a great pleasure for me that we were once more able to meet, here in St. Gallen, after so long an absence. I considered it as my task, to-day in particular, to add to the truths which you can gather through our books, something which should perhaps be said within our movement more personally, from soul to soul, so that it may be understood in the right way. For the essential thing in our movement is to find the right connection of our soul to the truths concerning the spiritual world, and not to take in these facts of spiritual science like a catechism. In that case, spiritual science will not only be a science, but a real path of life; it will be a true soul-nourishment -- a nourishment that does not undermine our spiritual health and spiritual freshness, but one that stimulates them in such a way, that in spite of every opposition from the external world, we stand harmoniously in that world, whose nature we have now in part been studying.

What I wished to explain to you to-day, is the attitude of our souls towards spiritual science. The description of certain phenomena of our time, which can perhaps be illumined adequately only by spiritual science, the description of these phenomena was necessary, because only a clear, precise insight into the world in which we live enables us to find, even as followers of the anthroposophical world-conception, the real inner attitude towards it, and true harmony. This inner harmony will also bring harmony into our life. For it is a spiritual scientific ideal that spiritual science should bring harmony into our life, in an ever growing measure. In the light of this ideal, I wished to speak to you to-day.

MAN'S RELATIONSHIP WITH THE SURROUNDING WORLD

Lecture by Dr. RUDOLF STEINER, delivered at NUREMBERG on the
1st of December, 1907.

Let me speak to you to-day of many different things which can easily be linked together and in which you will readily discover a kind of relationship.

Let me speak to you above all of man's connection with the surrounding world, of man's feelings towards this world, and how these feelings can be deepened through a spiritual-scientific world-conception. Above all, I wish to awaken in you the feeling that a man with an average modern education does not contemplate the world in the same way as a follower of spiritual science.

If spiritual science is to be raised from the level at which it is understood by so many, from the level of a theory, or number of teachings, to something which fills our whole soul, purifying and ennobling all our feelings, if it is to be raised to a real life-content, we must be able, as it were, to apply to our daily life what we have received from spiritual science. We have received spiritual science in the right way, if, for instance, we regard a plant, a field, or an animal in a different way from before, if we have feelings that differ from those which we had before we acquired spiritual knowledge. We shall enter more deeply into the meaning of these words, if we penetrate into the real nature of SELF-CONSCIOUSNESS.

You are all familiar with the self-consciousness of man. You know that we distinguish four parts in the human being: His physical body, his etheric body, his astral body and his Ego. What we call self-consciousness arises from the fact that man grows conscious of his Ego. Self-consciousness does not only enable us to gain knowledge of the surrounding world, but also of ourselves; it enables us to know that each one of us is an independent being.

The question now arises: How do matters stand with the animal, the plant and the mineral? - Can we speak in a certain sense of self-consciousness in the case of animal, plant and mineral? People who simply say: "Why should not every stone also have an ego, like man, only that man does not perceive it" ... such people speak without any knowledge of things. For upon the plane which we call the physical, only man is endowed with self-consciousness, with an ego, - and the animal, the plant and the mineral have no ego upon the physical plane. Man is distinguished from ~~the~~ animal, plant and mineral by the fact that he has an Ego here, upon the physical plane, in the ordinary world.

But you must not think that my words imply a hard and fast alternative. You must realise clearly that certain higher animals, particularly animals that live much in the company of man, such as domestic animals, have a kind of self-consciousness, resembling

that of the lower savages of to-day. There are grades everywhere; we shall not speak now of the various grades, but of the main facts to be found under average conditions. From this standpoint, we may therefore say that, generally speaking, we do not come across self-consciousness in animals, here, upon the physical plane.

What kind of self-consciousness do animals possess? You will easily come to an understanding if you ask yourselves: Where is the self-consciousness of each of my fingers? There you must say: My own consciousness is the self-consciousness of my fingers. It cannot be thought of apart from my common consciousness. My ten fingers have their common consciousness in my Ego; there, they have their common Ego. The same applies to the other members of the body. This constitutes my self-consciousness

Now transfer this concept to the concept of an animal species. There you must say: Everything in the animal kingdom which has the same form, all the lions, bears, frogs, fish - all these lions belonging together, are really connected in the same way as my ten fingers. Distance does not count. If we were to ask each finger as to its ego, it would have to answer: It is the Ego of the man to whom we belong. In the same way, if you were to ask a lion in a menagerie, or a lion in Africa, where its ego is to be found, each would point to the common ego of the species, to the group-ego.

All animals having the same form have a common ego. Man differs from the animal through the fact that each human being has his own Ego, whereas the animal has an ego common to his species, a group-ego. You cannot find the egos of the animals in the physical world, for they live in a world which we call the astral plane. There, you will find one Being comprising all the lions. Just as here, upon the physical plane, you may encounter an individual human being enclosed within his skin, so - if you were clairvoyant - you would encounter upon the astral plane the Lion-ego, the Bear-ego, as self-contained Beings, as individual Beings, like the human being here on earth. Upon the astral plane, they are intelligent beings, who are not in any way behind man. The single lion may be inferior to man, but his ego is a very lofty Being, who must understand and accomplish with penetrating wisdom the whole task connected with the lions here on earth. These animal-egos are therefore highly intelligent Beings.

If you were now to follow clairvoyantly these Beings who constitute the collective egos of the animals, you would see that they exercise a very strange activity. The animals' tasks are ruled and governed by the Beings whom we call the animal-egos. These animal-egos constantly surround the earth.

Let me select one example out of many, in connection with the task of these animal-egos. If you study a well-known phenomenon, about which men have thought a great deal, if you study the flight of the birds, you will find that the birds that live in northern

regions begin to gather in the autumn; they fly from north-eastern to south-western regions, and then southwards. They gather again in the spring and return north. At the foundation of these bird migrations lies the breeding and hatching of the young, etc. The spring migration is a kind of wedding flight. The regularity of these flights is guided by the group-souls; they arrange everything. You may even observe the different forms of these flights: One species flies in this way, another in that way some birds fly low over the ground, others high above the clouds. You may find a deep wisdom in all these details. We may say: Everything that constitutes the souls of the animals encircles our planet, encircles our earth. This example shows us how the wisdom of the group-soul rules the flight of the birds.

How do matters stand with plants? - They only have a physical and an etheric body. Individually, they have no independent astral body and no independent ego upon the physical plane. If you could observe yourself during your night's sleep, you would see your physical and etheric body lying on the bed. What remains behind on the bed has the value of a plant; the plant always consists of this. What lives in you during the day, when you are awake, what is contained in your physical body, is outside your physical and etheric body during the night.

In the case of the plant, the astral body and the ego, which you lift out of your physical and etheric body during the night, are always outside. But this going out of the astral body and of the Ego is connected with something else.

Let us suppose that you were all to go to sleep here - which would, of course, not be very desirable; in that case, all your Egoes and your astral bodies would be outside. They would not be so separated, as they are now separated from one another, while they live in the physical body; they would intermingle more, they would form a more uniform mass, as if they were to dwell in one another; they would dissolve, as it were, in a common astral body of the earth, and out of this astral body of the earth, which is mingled with that of the Sun, they would draw the strength which eliminates fatigue. This is continually the case with the plants.

In the plant, you see before you a physical and an etheric body. But the plant's astral body is outside. The whole earth has an astral body in common, and that is the astral body of the plants. And the earth also has a common Ego, so that you must look for the ego of the plants in the common Ego of the whole earth.

And now all the plants on earth appear to you like your own fingers. The whole earth is an organism, and the plants are literally its members, which share in the common consciousness. What ensues from this, is literally true. You feel pain, when someone hurts you, or cuts into your flesh. Similarly the whole earth may feel pain under certain conditions. But the earth does not feel pain when you pick a flower or cut off a plant; this would not

cause it pain. What causes pain to the earth can be understood if we bear in mind the following:

The whole earth must be imagined as an organism and all the plants as members of this common organism. The plants growing upon the earth are connected with it more or less in the same way as the milk is connected with the human being, or with the animal. When the calf sucks the milk of the cow, the cow experiences a feeling of well-being. The whole earth has this feeling when you pick a flower or cut a plant. What the earth sends up to the sun, what it sends out of itself, is in a different form that which lives in the milk. But if you tear out a plant with its root, it is the same as if you were to tear away a part of your body, or cut into your flesh. The earth experiences something quite different when we cut a plant which is firmly rooted in the ground - then the earth experiences well-being - , or when we tear it out with its root. This should not be judged morally, but in accordance with the facts, and these are the facts.

Now try to feel, and not merely to think such a truth. We can feel it in the following way: When we go out in the autumn, and see a farmer mowing down the corn with the scythe, those who know how matters stand can feel what is taking place, they can feel the feelings of well-being and of joy which pass through the astral body of the earth, while the corn is being cut. When the reaper cuts down the corn at harvest time, the whole earth really experiences joy. These kinds of feelings are experienced, when we know how matters stand with the group-soul of animals, the earth-soul of plants, the group-Ego, the Ego of the earth: In the migrating flock of birds we can feel the wisdom, the wise influence of the astral Beings who control them. We can even feel the wind of wisdom, like a current of air. And if we know that in the plants we confront the soul of the earth, we experience feelings and sensations in everything that takes place in the plants. We feel the cosmic Spirit in the environment of the earth, when we observe the ego of the animals; and we feel the cosmic Soul, we experience the feelings of Nature, when we regard the ego of the plants.

This is indeed so. If we look upon the teachings of spiritual science not merely theoretically, if they fill our whole soul, we can feel the presence of the God who always passes through Nature. When one man faces another, he knows - does he not? - that a feeling heart beats in the other's breast, that he has feelings similar to his own, that he does not merely form thoughts about him, but also feels with him. In the same way, we gradually learn to experience something resembling the warm, pulsing life, the warm feeling of Nature. Nature becomes for us a living knowledge of spirit and soul.

Let us now imagine what it means to spiritualise Nature through this teaching.... We feel as if spiritual science enables us to bear ourselves quite differently towards everything, as if our feelings are purified and ennobled. What an indifferent matter

it is to an ordinary man when the scythe passes through the corn, and cuts it down! And what a different experience this is to a spiritual investigator, who follows the cutting scythe with his heart, and who knows that there below, where the scythe touches, is a living Being, that the astral body of the earth experiences pleasure. Thus Nature gradually becomes full of life for us. This means that we must allow apparently abstract theories to grow into living feelings and sensations. Every step in daily life changes, when we thus allow theory to become feeling

(TO BE CONTINUED)

M E M O R I E S

By Albert Steffen.

In August 1914, when the last war began, a phenomenon could be observed for the first time, which has now become quite usual: The distortion of truth, developed into a scientific method. At that time, one ascribed it to the fear of the responsible people in the face of world-history and its forum. But to-day the attempt is even being made to change the meaning of history and to set up the corresponding court of judgment.

During those first weeks of war, one awoke every morning to the realisation of this conflict of nations; every night it dwindled out of one's consciousness and one had to face it anew every day. It was impossible to think of war as a constant condition. Even the cleverest looked upon it as something which had to cease sooner or later. They preferred to abide by past things: by natural science based on sense-observation and the intellect, and by the traditional religious beliefs, with their conception of sin. They still wished to rescue the fruits of culture and the promises of religion. To-day, however, they both lead into a blind alley, for the enhancement of technics leads to destruction, and belief in the kingdom of God to renunciation.

Only a few perceived the new element of culture which already existed at that time and which might have helped.

To-day it would be a sin not to draw attention to it.

It is Rudolf Steiner's spiritual science.

At that time, I was profoundly immersed in Goethe's metamorphosis of the plants. From childhood on, I had a deep connection with trees and flowers. I loved them, as if they were my sisters and brothers. This love changed with every new age of life. In Lausanne, where I had studied natural science, a crisis suddenly threatened it. In spite of my great interest for the structure and physiology of

plants, the botanical laboratory threatened to paralyse my enthusiasm. Up to that time, I had always experienced every plant in connection with the landscape in which it grew, and I had never studied it as a lifeless preparation upon a lamelley. I had never looked upon it as a part, but always as a whole; I had never observed it under a microscope, but during my walks. Perhaps I would have lost every contact with the plants, as most students do, had I not found access to Goethe's archetypal plant. So my love could rise to new life. At the same time, it gave a higher impulse to my poetry. Soon after, this new impulse brought me to Dornach, where I carved upon an ash-wood arch, between the two arcitraves under the great dome of the first Goetheanum. This also implied work upon my own self.

In moulding my words, I sought objectivity and expressive power in two directions: From the idea which becomes image, and from the form which becomes movement.

My diary contains many sentences such as the following: "If we observe the growth of a tree, we perceive that, as a visible being, it is the perfect of a sensory-supersensible present, containing a future, which is still invisible.

"The inner forces which determine the external form follow a line which is living mathematics. The vertical and the spiral with their intermingling forces, contained in the whole vegetable kingdom, express a language in which the Sun speaks with the elements of the earth and with the beings of the universe.

"The archetypal plant is a word uttered by the creator of the world. The poet must endeavour to grasp it in sounds and rhythms. If he can experience the Sun's being in the growth and decay of the plants, if he can penetrate again and again into this solar consciousness, developing within it the primeval and surest Ego-experience, in spite of instincts and in spite of death, this is a victory which outweighs all the deeds of war. Such a transformation means more than all the aims of war. It is a true treasure of life, common to every nation and reconciling all human beings. We should prize it more to work in this spirit, than to follow the desires of our body filled with passions, or to risk one's bodily life.

"Those who train themselves in this direction, experience peace even in the midst of war."

Europe appeared to me, in spite of its torn condition, like a powerful, everlasting cosmic being. The citizens of various nations, who were working together at the Goetheanum, proved this anew every morning, when they began their day's task.

I wished to discover, at that time, if one could live in the midst of a warring nation, with the knowledge of the higher worlds in one's soul. And so I travelled to Germany, where I had spent some time studying, with the exception of a few terms in Zurich